NPT/CONF.2020/PC.II/SR.1

Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Distr.: General
15 August 2018

Original: English

Second session
23 April–4 May 2018

Summary record of the 1st meeting
Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Monday, 23 April 2018, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Bugajski ..... (Poland)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Opening of the session

1. **The Chair** declared open the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which was being convened pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/68 of 11 December 2015.

2. The international security environment was at least as fragile as it had been during the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference, with no decrease in regional conflicts, instability or tensions between some States parties. Indeed, positions were at times more polarized and several outstanding issues remained. Nonetheless, there had recently been promising developments. Moreover, throughout its almost 50 years of existence, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons had been the centrepiece of the non-proliferation regime, not only dissuading a number of States parties from acquiring nuclear weapons but also surviving the Cold War and the lack of tangible outcomes to four review conferences. Although the Non-Proliferation Treaty was not perfect, it united States parties in their efforts to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. Furthermore, it was an indispensable reference framework for organizations such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, and one without which effective disarmament, non-proliferation and advancement of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy would be unthinkable. The legacy of the Treaty should motivate the States parties, whose primary collective responsibility was to uphold the credibility and integrity of the Treaty and strengthen its effectiveness and implementation, in their discussions.

3. He urged the States parties to communicate in a respectful and receptive manner, to focus on common ground and practical solutions, and to engage in fair, focused and results-oriented discussions that would establish solid building blocks for the next session of the Preparatory Committee and the 2020 Review Conference. He particularly encouraged the active involvement of female participants, which would enrich the debate.

Statement by the High Representative of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs

4. **Ms. Nakamitsu** (High Representative of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs) said that the disarmament agenda currently being developed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations was aimed at re-energizing the international discourse by offering new perspectives on the traditional agenda and identifying areas in which more coherent and collaborative efforts within the United Nations system could better support Member States' disarmament obligations. The Secretary-General was exploring how he could use his moral authority to support shared norms against the use, testing and proliferation of nuclear weapons. His intention to facilitate resumed dialogue on strategic arms control and disarmament, and to promote practical measures to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons, was based on the conviction that human and security considerations were not mutually exclusive and should underpin and lend urgency to the international community's efforts.

5. Almost 50 years since the Non-Proliferation Treaty had opened for signature, it had transcended its initial purpose to become the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime and an essential tool in achieving nuclear disarmament. Almost universal adherence to the Treaty, and the fact that it represented a legally binding commitment to disarmament and verifiable non-proliferation safeguards, formed the basis for its status as one of the most successful and credible multilateral security instruments. It was vital not to take that success and credibility for granted.

6. The international community now faced challenges similar to those that had led to the establishment of the Treaty. The growing threat of the use of nuclear weapons, which concerned all humanity, would remain as long as such weapons continued to exist. The geopolitical environment was deteriorating. Some of the most important instruments and agreements on collective security were being eroded and rhetoric about the necessity and utility of nuclear weapons was on the rise. Moreover, modernization programmes implemented by nuclear-weapon States were leading to what many saw as a new qualitative arms race. The recent hiatus in negotiations among the major powers on arms control and disarmament created real concerns that unless the trend was reversed there would soon be no verified constraints on nuclear arsenals.

7. Yet there were reasons for hope. The Secretary-General had welcomed recent developments on the Korean Peninsula, including the recommitment of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to denuclearization, the establishment of an inter-Korean hotline and other steps taken to improve inter-Korean relations. It was hoped that the decision by that country to suspend nuclear tests and launches of intercontinental ballistic missiles and to dismantle its nuclear test site would build trust and foster an environment enabling

sincere dialogue. The Secretary-General anticipated the positive outcome of the upcoming inter-Korean summit and hoped for early agreement on a framework for resumed negotiation leading to verifiable denuclearization and sustainable peace on the Korean Peninsula. Meanwhile, the Secretary-General remained convinced that the joint comprehensive plan of action was the best means of ensuring the exclusively peaceful nature of the nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran and tangible economic benefits for the Iranian people. She hoped that all participants remained fully committed to the plan's implementation and long-term preservation.

8. In order to achieve the current session's primary goal of preparing the ground for the success of the 2020 Review Conference, States parties must return to the common path that had been painstakingly built over the previous five decades. It was important to remember that efforts to sustain the Treaty and produce a successful review cycle were undertaken because a strong and credible Treaty was vital for enhancing the international community's collective security.

9. In conclusion, she hoped that the debate would be conducted constructively and in the spirit of common purpose. She urged States parties to act with alacrity given that 2020 was only two years away and a successful outcome required immediate action. The nuclear-weapon States had a responsibility to lead nuclear disarmament efforts, but all States parties were responsible for taking the necessary measures to ensure the full implementation and future health of the Treaty.

Adoption of the agenda (NPT/CONF.2020/PC.I/15 and NPT/CONF.2020/PC.II/INF/3/Rev.1)

10. **The Chair** recalled that the agenda for all three sessions of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference had been adopted at the first session in 2017 and was set out in document NPT/CONF.2020/PC.I/15.

11. Drawing attention to the indicative timetable for the current session (NPT/CONF.2020/PC.II/INF/3/Rev.1), he took it that the Committee wished to take note of that timetable and to structure its work accordingly.

12. *It was so decided.*

Organization of work of the Preparatory Committee (NPT/CONF.2020/PC.II/CRP.1)

(a) Election of officers

13. The Chair said that, in accordance with previous practice, the sessional Chairs served as Vice-Chairs of the Committee during sessions when they were not serving as Chair. In that regard, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries had nominated Mr. Yaakob of Malaysia to serve as the Chair of the third session of the Preparatory Committee. He took it that the Committee wished to elect Mr. Yaakob as the Chair of the third session.

14. *It was so decided.*

15. **The Chair** informed the Committee that Mr. van der Kwast, Chair of the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference, had resigned and would be succeeded by Mr. Gabriëlse, Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the Conference on Disarmament and Disarmament Ambassador-at-large, as a member of the bureau of the Preparatory Committee.

(b) Dates and venues for further sessions

16. **The Chair** said that, following consultations and based on information provided by the Secretariat, the proposed dates for the third session of the Preparatory Committee, to be held in New York, were 29 April to 10 May 2019. Those dates took into account the provisional calendar of meetings of the United Nations disarmament bodies. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to hold its third session on those dates.

17. *It was so decided.*

(c) Methods of work

(i) Decision-making

18. **The Chair** suggested that, in accordance with past practice, the Committee should adopt the following decision: "The Committee decides to make every effort to adopt its decisions by consensus. In the event that consensus could not be reached, the Committee could then take decisions in accordance with the rules of procedure of the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which would be applied mutatis mutandis."

19. *It was so decided.*

(ii) Participation

20. **The Chair** suggested that, with regard to the participation of entities other than States parties in the sessions of the Preparatory Committee, the Committee should adopt the following decision, based on the practice of the previous preparatory committees, the relevant rules of procedure of the 2015 Review Conference and the agreement at the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference:

"1. Representatives of States not parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons should be allowed, upon request, to attend as observers the meetings of the Committee other than those designated closed meetings, to be seated in the Committee behind their countries' nameplates and to receive documents of the Committee. They should also be entitled to submit documents to the participants in the Committee.

"2. Representatives of specialized agencies and international and regional intergovernmental organizations should be allowed, upon request, to attend as observers the meetings of the Committee other than those designated closed meetings, to be seated in the Committee behind their organizations' nameplates and to receive documents of the Committee. They should also be entitled to submit, in writing, their views and comments on questions within their competence, which may be circulated as documents of the Committee. Furthermore, the Committee decides, based on the agreement at the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 NPT Review Conference, which would be applied mutatis mutandis, that specialized agencies and international and regional intergovernmental organizations should be invited to make oral presentations to the Committee upon the decision of the Committee on a case-by-case basis.

"3. Representatives of non-governmental organizations should be allowed, upon request, to attend the meetings of the Committee other than those designated closed, to be seated in the designated area, to receive documents of the Committee and, at their own expense, to make written material available to the participants in the Committee. The Committee shall also allocate a meeting to non-governmental organizations to address each session of the Committee."

21. *It was so decided.*

22. **The Chair** informed the Committee that no States had requested to attend the session as observers.

23. The following specialized agencies and intergovernmental organizations and entities had requested to attend the session of the Preparatory Committee: the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials, the European Union, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the League of Arab States, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research; in addition, the 66 non-governmental organizations listed in document NPT/CONF.2020/PC.II/INF/5/Rev.1 had submitted requests to attend. He took it that the Committee wished to take note of those requests.

24. *It was so decided.*

(iii) Working languages

25. **The Chair** said he took it that the Committee wished to continue its past practice of using Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish as its working languages.

26. *It was so decided.*

(iv) Records and documents

27. **The Chair** noted that during the previous sessions of the Preparatory Committee, summary records had been provided, at each session, for the Committee's opening meeting, the general debate and the closing meeting. In addition, records had been kept of the decisions taken at other meetings. He took it that the Committee wished to proceed accordingly at the current session.

28. *It was so decided.*

Organization of the 2020 Review Conference
(NPT/CONF.2020/PC.II/CRP.1)

(a) Dates and venue

29. **The Chair** said that, following consultations and based on information provided by the Secretariat, the proposed dates for the 2020 Review Conference, to be held in New York, were 27 April to 22 May 2020. Those dates took into account the provisional calendar of meetings of the United Nations disarmament bodies. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to hold the 2020 Review Conference on those dates.

30. *It was so decided.*

(f) Financing of the Review Conference, including its Preparatory Committee
(NPT/CONF.2020/PC.II/1)

31. **The Chair** drew the Committee's attention to paragraph 3 of document NPT/CONF.2020/PC.II/1, which, inter alia, indicated that costs associated with the preparation and holding of the 2020 Review Conference

and the sessions of its Preparatory Committee would be borne by the States parties to the Treaty and that there would be no financial implications for the regular budget of the United Nations. Those activities would be undertaken by the Secretariat only after sufficient funding was received, in advance. In that regard, he noted that the production of official documentation in all six languages was one of the most expensive budget items and a major factor contributing to high costs. The cooperation of delegations in that respect was therefore much appreciated.

General debate on issues related to all aspects of the work of the Preparatory Committee

32. **Mr. Cichocki** (Poland) said that, as his country prepared to assume the presidency of the United Nations Security Council, and as a non-permanent member of the Council, it had prioritized support for and the promotion of existing international law, and was especially devoted to maintaining the primacy of a rules-based order. Since its entry into force, the Non-Proliferation Treaty had stood at the heart of the global regime for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. It had continuously fostered international efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, achieve a world free of nuclear weapons and facilitate access to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Poland remained committed to strengthening each of the Treaty's mutually reinforcing pillars; non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy were complementary goals that should be pursued together, systematically and with equal determination.

33. Despite current geopolitical challenges, including the rapid development by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of its nuclear programme, the uncertain future of the joint comprehensive plan of action, the lack of progress in relation to the holding of a conference on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, and increasing divisions with respect to the terms and pace of nuclear disarmament, the Treaty continued to be an essential part of the modern security system and the ultimate point of reference for non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament initiatives.

34. The current review cycle was an opportunity to reaffirm the integrity and viability of the Treaty, and States parties should make full use of all opportunities to review its implementation. The sessions of the Preparatory Committee played a role not only in paving the way for a productive review conference but also in affording opportunities to present ideas and overcome differences.

35. The only way to achieve the global vision of a world without nuclear weapons was through effective, verifiable and irreversible nuclear disarmament. That would be possible only if all States worked in unison in the belief that doing so strengthened their security. Poland therefore supported a progressive approach to nuclear disarmament.

36. Poland was committed to strengthening existing organizations, such as IAEA, and would work to bring about the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices (fissile material cut-off treaty). Moreover, it was working to establish a robust and credible verification regime of concrete nuclear disarmament measures, as demonstrated by its participation in the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification, the Group of Governmental Experts on Verification in All its Aspects, including the Role of the United Nations in the Field of Verification, and in the high-level fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group.

37. Given the threat posed by non-State actors seeking weapons of mass destruction and related material and technology, Poland was committed to attaining the highest level of nuclear security within the framework of IAEA. It had been actively involved in the Proliferation Security Initiative and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, and its chairmanship of the regular meetings of the subscribing States to the International Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (Hague Code of Conduct) for the period 2017–2018 demonstrated its concern with regard to the connection between the proliferation of missiles and nuclear technologies. Poland also valued the role of export control regimes as complementary tools in curbing proliferation, and supported the strengthening of the IAEA safeguards system, which was a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and played a vital role in the implementation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

38. His country continued to support the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The Ministry of Energy was updating its plan to implement a nuclear power programme aimed at diversifying electricity generation infrastructure, ensuring a secure energy supply and reducing the environmental impact of non-renewable energy. Poland pledged full transparency with regard to its future activities in the area of nuclear energy. It had also hosted several IAEA missions to ensure that Polish nuclear infrastructure complied with all international standards and best practices.

39. As the fiftieth anniversary of the Treaty's entry into force approached, it was important to restore a spirit of trust and cooperation to ensure that the Treaty produced tangible results. All States parties should take a proactive, constructive and flexible approach to ensure the success of the current session.

40. **Mr. Feruta** (Chief Coordinator, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)) said that the transfer of nuclear technology to developing countries was one of the most important areas of the Agency's work, as such technology helped countries to, inter alia, reduce poverty, generate electricity, manage water resources, treat diseases and respond to climate change. IAEA focused on transferring knowledge and expertise through high-quality technical training, thus enabling countries to train future generations of nuclear specialists. Furthermore, IAEA helped to increase food supplies by using nuclear techniques to develop new varieties of higher-yield, more resistant crops. IAEA also assisted developing countries in fighting cancer through the provision of technical support, equipment and training to health-care professionals.

41. Excellent progress was being made with regard to the modernization of the Agency's eight nuclear applications laboratories near Vienna. The laboratories trained scientists, supported research in areas such as human health and food, and provided analytical services to national laboratories. A new insect pest control laboratory had been inaugurated in September 2017 and a flexible modular laboratory building would be opened in November 2018. In addition, a new linear accelerator facility, which would become operational in the Agency's Dosimetry Laboratory in the second half of 2018, would significantly enhance the assistance the Agency provided to countries in the safe and effective use of radiotherapy.

42. The IAEA Peaceful Uses Initiative, launched in 2010, provided additional funds for the Agency's technical cooperation activities and had helped to raise over 120 million euros for more than 260 projects that benefited around 150 countries. He was grateful to all countries for their support in that respect.

43. Nuclear power could help address the twin challenges of ensuring reliable energy supplies and curbing greenhouse gas emissions; indeed, nuclear power generated almost one third of low-carbon electricity worldwide. There were currently 450 nuclear power reactors in operation in 30 countries and another 30 countries, the majority of them developing nations, were considering or had begun constructing their first reactors. If countries decided to use nuclear power, IAEA helped them to do so safely, securely and sustainably. The IAEA Scientific Forum 2018, to be held in September, formed part of the Agency's efforts to raise awareness of the important role played by nuclear technology in mitigating climate change and its consequences. Work continued on the establishment of the IAEA Low Enriched Uranium Bank in Kazakhstan, and transit agreements between IAEA and the Russian Federation and between IAEA and China had entered into force. One of the most important IAEA events of 2018 would be the Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology, which would take place in Vienna from 28 to 30 November 2018.

44. While nuclear safety and security were the responsibility of member States, IAEA played a central role in ensuring effective international cooperation in those areas. Lessons from the Fukushima Daiichi accident had been incorporated into all IAEA nuclear safety requirements, ensuring that they would become part of global safety practice. Safety culture must continue to be strengthened. In September 2017, the IAEA Board of Governors had adopted the Nuclear Security Plan 2018-2021, and IAEA would continue its work as the global platform for strengthening nuclear security.

45. Demands on the Agency in the field of nuclear verification were growing steadily owing to the additional quantities of nuclear material that were being made subject to safeguards. A total of 182 States had safeguards agreements in force, while 132 States had brought additional protocols into force. States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty that had not yet implemented comprehensive safeguards agreements or concluded additional protocols should do so without delay.

46. IAEA had been monitoring and verifying the implementation by the Islamic Republic of Iran of its nuclear-related commitments under the joint comprehensive plan of action. The country's implementation of its additional protocol had significantly improved access to locations and information. IAEA inspectors now spent a combined total of approximately 3,000 days a year in the field, which was twice as many as in 2013. They had taken hundreds of environmental samples and placed around 2,000 tamper-proof seals on nuclear material and equipment. Furthermore, thousands of images were captured daily by the Agency's surveillance cameras, and several million pieces of open-source information were collected and analysed each month. The Islamic Republic of Iran was thus subject to the world's most robust nuclear verification regime.

47. The nuclear programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea remained a major cause for concern. Despite the fact that IAEA inspectors had left the country in 2009, the Agency had continued to collect and evaluate information, including by monitoring satellite imagery. It remained ready to resume verification activities when political developments made that possible. The Agency called on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply fully with its obligations under relevant Security Council resolutions and to resolve all outstanding issues, including those that had arisen since 2009.

48. There had been no major developments concerning the implementation by the Syrian Arab Republic of its safeguards agreement over the past year. IAEA continued to urge that country to cooperate with it fully in connection with all unresolved issues.

49. The Agency made an important contribution to achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. Its safeguards activities, through which it aimed to provide credible assurances about the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities, were a valuable international confidence-building measure. Furthermore, IAEA supported the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, which already covered vast regions of the world.

50. **Mr. Zerbo** (Executive Secretary, Preparatory Committee for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization) said that in the face of frequently voiced concerns that current rising tensions and uncertainty were the result of ineffectiveness of the instruments, approaches and mechanisms used to date to combat weapons of mass destruction, it was important to focus on what brought real security: negotiated agreements that were verifiable and credibly enforceable. In that spirit, he welcomed news that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was considering suspending nuclear tests and dismantling its test site as part of a possible negotiated agreement. The Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty could play an important role in that process, providing the necessary security and certainty by formalizing the country's commitment to cease nuclear testing. Adherence to the Treaty, which was founded on a robust verification system, was the only way to overcome the lack of trust that was impeding progress on the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. In that regard, his Organization was ready to assist in any way possible.

51. The Committee had two years to prepare the ground for an outcome to the 2020 Review Conference that proved to the world that nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament could be achieved within a clear, rules-based framework. In an ever-changing political landscape, the Non-Proliferation Treaty was an immovable foundation for a future of peace and security. Those who had created the Treaty in the 1960s had foreseen that the nuclear age would require a set of diplomatic and normative tools to prevent humanitarian and environmental destruction, and had demonstrated resolve in striking a long-lasting "grand bargain" to deliver peace and security. If the Treaty was under strain, it was not because the instrument itself was fatally flawed, but because there had been insufficient efforts to maintain and secure its entire chain of responsibilities, of which the entry into force of the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty was an essential part. That Treaty had been an integral part of the decision made in 1995 to extend the Non-Proliferation Treaty. It provided the international community with a non-discriminatory, verifiable and legally-binding means of ensuring that no nuclear test explosion, or any other nuclear explosion, could take place. The world now had at its disposal the most extensive global monitoring system ever seen. Hundreds of detection facilities in over 90 countries were currently gathering and transmitting data to the state-of-the-art International Data Centre in Vienna. Accurate and reliable data on every nuclear test that had been conducted in the twenty-first century was shared with States signatories to the Test-Ban Treaty well within strict timelines.

52. Nonetheless, the unfortunate reality was that despite 183 signatories and 166 ratifications, more than two decades had passed since the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty had opened for signature and more than six since a nuclear test ban had first been mooted. The benefits provided for under that Treaty could be permanently secured only through its entry into force, which was the most practical, achievable and effective disarmament measure available to the international community given that the verification regime established by the Treaty was already in operation and there was a de facto global moratorium on nuclear tests. Moreover, action on the Treaty would provide the impetus for the progress needed during the Non-Proliferation Treaty review cycle.

53. All States had the responsibility to pass on to future generations hard-won gains such as the two treaties. The challenge was not to rethink the value of the Treaty or of the multilateral approach, but, rather, to put the Treaty back on track. Diplomacy, supported by rigorous, science-based verification tools, remained the key to real security. It was essential to preserve the integrity of the Treaty across all of its pillars and to identify all possible means of making progress towards the international community's shared goals.

54. **Mr. Valero** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), speaking on behalf of the Group of States parties belonging to the Non-Aligned Movement, said that nuclear disarmament was the highest priority for the Group, which remained extremely concerned by the threat to humanity posed by the existence of nuclear weapons. Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation were mutually reinforcing and essential for strengthening international peace and security. It was counterproductive and unsustainable to pursue non-proliferation while ignoring nuclear disarmament obligations. Proliferation concerns were best addressed through multilaterally negotiated, universal, comprehensive and non-discriminatory agreements. He therefore welcomed multilateral efforts towards nuclear disarmament and the total elimination of nuclear weapons, and noted with satisfaction the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons on 7 July 2017 at the United Nations conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination. The negotiation and conclusion of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons, containing a phased programme for the total elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified time frame, were urgently needed.

55. The Group stressed that reductions in deployments and in operational status were no substitute for the irreversible and total elimination of nuclear weapons. It also reaffirmed the importance of the application by the nuclear-weapon States of the principles of transparency, irreversibility and verifiability in all measures related to the fulfilment of their nuclear disarmament obligations. Full compliance by the nuclear-weapon States with their undertakings was imperative and would enhance confidence in the non-proliferation and disarmament regime.

56. The indefinite extension of the Treaty did not imply the indefinite possession of nuclear arsenals. Any such assumption was incompatible with the object and purpose of the Treaty. The continued existence of nuclear weapons, and the military doctrines of the nuclear-weapon States and of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization that set out rationales for the use or threat of use of such weapons, posed the greatest threat to peace and security. Such doctrines could not be justified on any grounds. The Group noted with grave concern the current intensive investment by nuclear-weapon States in the modernization of their nuclear forces and the development of newer, more effective low-yield nuclear warheads. The increased role of those inhumane weapons in military doctrines lowered the threshold for their actual use. The Group therefore urged the nuclear-weapon States to end the new nuclear arms race and to comply with their legal obligations and unequivocal undertakings to eliminate all their nuclear weapons without further delay, and called upon all States parties to comply with their legal obligations under article VI of the Treaty.

57. Pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, the Group called for the early commencement of negotiations on effective, universal, unconditional, non-discriminatory, irrevocable and legally binding security assurances by all nuclear-weapon States with regard to the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons as a matter of high priority. Despite long-standing requests by non-nuclear-weapon States to receive such legally binding universal assurances, no tangible progress had been achieved in that respect. The Group called for reaffirmation by the Review Conference that any use or threat of use of nuclear weapons would be a crime against humanity and a violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

58. Non-proliferation policies should not undermine the inalienable rights of States to acquire, access, import or export nuclear material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes. States also had an inalienable right to research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination, and to participate as fully as possible in the exchange of equipment, material and scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

59. IAEA was the sole competent authority for the verification of compliance by its member States with the obligations established under their respective safeguards agreements with the Agency, and was mandated under its statute to further global disarmament through safeguards. The Group was confident of the Agency's impartiality and professionalism, and strongly rejected any attempts by States to politicize or interfere with its work.

60. The Group underlined the importance of universal adherence to the Treaty, and called on all States that were not parties to accede as non-nuclear-weapon States without delay and to place all their nuclear facilities and activities under IAEA comprehensive safeguards. All States parties should make every effort to achieve the universality of the Treaty and refrain from taking any action that could jeopardize that objective. Strict observance of comprehensive IAEA safeguards and adherence to the Treaty were preconditions for any cooperation in the area of nuclear energy.

61. The Group regretted the failure of the ninth Review Conference to reach consensus on a final document despite the efforts made by members of the Non-Aligned Movement. That failure should motivate

States parties to work harder to achieve nuclear disarmament. Given that the upcoming Review Conference coincided with the fiftieth anniversary of the Treaty's entry into force, every effort should be made by States to avoid another such failure. That was largely dependent on the demonstration by the nuclear-weapon States of genuine political will and flexibility.

62. The Group reaffirmed its support for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, and underlined the importance of the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference. In that regard, it reiterated its serious concern over the protracted delay in the implementation of that resolution and called for its full implementation without further delay. Pending the establishment of such a zone, Israel must renounce any nuclear weapons it might possess, accede to the Treaty without preconditions or further delay and promptly place its nuclear facilities under comprehensive IAEA safeguards. The nuclear capability of Israel posed a serious and continuing threat to the security of neighbouring and other States. The Group condemned Israel for continuing to develop and stockpile nuclear arsenals and called for a total prohibition on transfers to Israel of any nuclear-related equipment, information, material, facilities, resources or devices, and on assistance in nuclear-related scientific or technological fields.

63. The Group was ready to engage with its partners constructively in order to achieve a successful outcome to the 2020 review process and ensure a peaceful and secure world for present and future generations.

64. **Mr. Bylica** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that the Non-Proliferation Treaty was the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime, the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament and an important element in the future development of nuclear energy applications for peaceful purposes.

65. The Treaty had retained its value over the past 50 years, despite ever-changing circumstances, and had continued to make a fundamental contribution to global security. The European Union was committed to upholding the Treaty as a key multilateral instrument, to promoting its universality and to enhancing its implementation. States that had not yet done so should join the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States, and all States parties should fulfil their obligations under the Treaty and the commitments they had undertaken during previous review conferences. With those objectives in mind and in the spirit of cooperation, the European Union would actively participate in the ongoing review process, and continued to promote comprehensive, balanced and full implementation of the action plan contained in the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference, which remained valid.

66. The European Union contributed actively to global efforts to achieve security and a safer world for all and to create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons in accordance with the goals of the Treaty, and in so doing promoted international stability. In that context, the European Union called for further progress on all aspects of disarmament to enhance global security.

67. All parties should contribute to improving the strategic context for arms control and disarmament and avoid eroding the rules-based multilateral system. They must endeavour to decrease international tensions, restore dialogue and trust and move from confrontation to cooperation in order to solve global security challenges and regional conflicts. All proliferation crises must be addressed resolutely. Given the current severe security environment, all States concerned should take appropriate and practical risk reduction measures, as outlined in the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference, to ensure the safety and security of their nuclear arsenals.

68. The European Union remained committed to the pursuit of nuclear disarmament, in accordance with article VI of the Treaty. Concrete progress was needed in respect of the full implementation of that article, especially through an overall reduction in the global stockpile of nuclear weapons while taking into account the special responsibility of the States that possessed the largest nuclear arsenals. In that regard, the European Union urged the United States of America and the Russian Federation to extend the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (New START Treaty) and to seek further reductions in their strategic and non-strategic, deployed and non-deployed nuclear weapons. The European Union encouraged further initiatives on confidence-building, transparency, verification activities and reporting, and welcomed the concrete actions taken by the two European nuclear-weapon States in that respect. In particular, it called for the preservation of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles

(Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty), which was vital for the security of Europe.

69. The European Union called on all States that had not yet done so to sign and ratify the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty without further delay. Promotion of the universalization and entry into force of that Treaty, which made an important contribution to international peace and security, remained a top priority. The European Union continued to provide significant financial support to the verification regime established under the Treaty. Pending the Treaty's entry into force, all States should uphold their moratoriums on nuclear-weapon-test explosions and any other nuclear explosions, and refrain from any action that would defeat the object and purpose of the Treaty.

70. The European Union remained committed to verifiable, treaty-based nuclear disarmament and arms control, and underlined the need to renew multilateral efforts and revitalize multilateral negotiating bodies. It called for the immediate negotiation, by the Conference on Disarmament, of a fissile material cut-off treaty, and in that regard looked forward to the recommendations of the high-level fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group. In the meantime, all States possessing nuclear weapons that had not yet done so should declare and uphold an immediate moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

71. The European Union supported the ongoing work on nuclear disarmament verification with the aim of developing appropriate multilateral technical capabilities. It welcomed the establishment of the group of governmental experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament and looked forward to further work in other forums, such as the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification.

72. Negative security assurances strengthened the nuclear non-proliferation regime. He therefore called on all nuclear-weapon States to reaffirm their existing security assurances, in line with relevant Security Council resolutions. As recommended by the 2010 Review Conference, the Conference on Disarmament should begin discussions with a view to elaborating recommendations on all aspects of the issue, without excluding the possibility of an international legally binding instrument.

73. The European Union remained gravely concerned about the nuclear and ballistic missile programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which posed a serious threat to international peace and security and the global non-proliferation regime. While ongoing diplomatic efforts to achieve a peaceful solution were timely and appreciated, it would be encouraging if the Democratic People's Republic of Korea fulfilled its recent commitments regarding testing. The international community must continue to exert maximum pressure on the country, including through the full and effective implementation of all relevant Security Council resolutions, until it embarked on a credible path towards complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization. The European Union urged the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply with its international obligations under multiple Security Council resolutions, to sign and ratify the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and to return to compliance with the Non-Proliferation Treaty and its comprehensive safeguards agreement. It was the firm stance of the European Union that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea could not have the status of a nuclear-weapon State under the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

74. The European Union reaffirmed its commitment to the joint comprehensive plan of action, which illustrated that it was possible to find peaceful and diplomatic solutions to even the most pressing proliferation challenges, and expected all parties to continue to implement the plan in full. It was in the common interest to preserve a deal that strengthened the global non-proliferation regime, contributed to regional and international peace and security and provided the necessary assurances with respect to the exclusively peaceful nature of the nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The European Union called on the Islamic Republic of Iran to promptly ratify an additional protocol to its safeguards agreement with IAEA and to refrain from ballistic missile launches, which were inconsistent with Security Council resolution 2231 (2015).

75. The continued non-compliance by the Syrian Arab Republic with its safeguards agreement was deeply regrettable. The European Union therefore once again urged that country to resolve all outstanding issues in full cooperation with IAEA and to conclude an additional protocol with the Agency as soon as possible. The European Union condemned in the strongest terms any use of chemical weapons and the deliberate targeting of civilians in the Syrian Arab Republic, which were further violations of the country's non-proliferation obligations in relation to weapons of mass destruction. The international community must end impunity for such war crimes.

76. The European Union reaffirmed its strong commitment to the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. It considered the 1995

resolution valid until its goals and objectives had been achieved, and strongly supported the outcome of the 2010 Review Conference relating to the Middle East. It was deeply regrettable that a conference on the establishment of such a zone in the Middle East had not been convened. All States in the region must urgently and proactively engage with the organizers and each other with the aim of enabling the conference to be convened as soon as possible, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at between those States. The European Union had continuously expressed its readiness to assist in the process, and had organized seminars in 2011 and 2012 and a capacity-building workshop in 2014 to help foster a conducive atmosphere and move the process forward. It continued to call on all States in the region that had not yet done so to accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (Chemical Weapons Convention), and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction.

77. The IAEA safeguards system was a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and played an indispensable role in the implementation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Comprehensive safeguards agreements, together with additional protocols, constituted the current verification standard. The Model Additional Protocol to the Agreements between States and the International Atomic Energy Agency for the Application of Safeguards should be universalized without delay.

78. The European Union also attached the utmost importance to effective export controls and supported the work of multilateral export control regimes. It urged all States to adhere to the relevant guidelines as well as to the Hague Code of Conduct. All States Members of the United Nations had a legal obligation to prevent the acquisition by States and non-State actors of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, as required by Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and subsequent resolutions on the matter.

79. The European Union recognized the right of States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, in accordance with article IV of the Treaty. It was in their common interest to ensure that nuclear energy was developed and used responsibly, under the most rigorous safety, security, safeguards and non-proliferation conditions.

80. The European Union continued to promote the highest standards of nuclear safety and security in Europe and worldwide, and urged all States to accede to the relevant international treaties. While nuclear safety and security remained a matter of national competence, strengthening nuclear security and safety through international cooperation was of the utmost importance. The international community must work together to prevent accidents and incidents, including trafficking in and terrorist access to nuclear or radiological materials. The safety and security of radioactive sources must be improved worldwide. IAEA played a central role in fostering strong nuclear security and safety cultures.

81. The European Union strongly supported the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme in all areas of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, which contributed to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, and called on all countries to contribute to the IAEA Technical Cooperation Fund.

82. Gender equality and the empowerment of women were priorities for the European Union, and the women and peace and security agenda continued to feature prominently in European Union external action. Women must be fully involved, through active and equal participation, in non-proliferation and disarmament efforts. The European Union also supported the further engagement of civil society and academia in addressing and discussing challenges related to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

83. **Mr. Ford** (United States of America) said that the current session provided the States parties with an opportunity to reflect on their shared interest in maintaining the Non-Proliferation Treaty, their shared responsibility for strengthening the non-proliferation regime and the central role of non-proliferation in achieving the full benefits of the Treaty, particularly the security benefits it provided to all States parties. An effective non-proliferation regime was key to building security conditions conducive to further progress on nuclear disarmament, and facilitated cooperation in respect of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy by building confidence that peaceful nuclear programmes would not be misused.

84. However, the non-proliferation regime currently faced serious threats, including the immediate challenge posed by the development of nuclear weaponry and delivery systems by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in violation of both the Non-Proliferation Treaty and multiple Security Council resolutions. The Islamic Republic of Iran also posed a longer-term challenge, having unlawfully and secretly sought to develop nuclear weapons and having continued to

enrich uranium in violation of Security Council resolutions, thus retaining the ability to produce such weapons rapidly. Furthermore, there was continued resistance by some States to the strengthening of nuclear safeguards, including through the implementation of additional protocols to States' comprehensive safeguards agreements with IAEA.

85. Nuclear disarmament must be addressed in the context of the overall security environment. Deteriorating security conditions, including the actions of States that were expanding and modernizing their nuclear stockpiles, threatening their neighbours or violating their arms control obligations meant that the short-term prospects for further progress on disarmament were bleak. Moreover, the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic and the recent chemical weapons attack in Salisbury, United Kingdom, had had a deleterious impact on collective security. Such transgressions of international law against the use of weapons of mass destruction should be of great concern to all, yet the response of the disarmament community to date had been regrettably weak. He therefore urged all States parties to engage in constructive discourse on how to facilitate further progress on nuclear disarmament, keeping in mind that the easing of international tension and the strengthening of trust between States would help to create the conditions necessary for such progress.

86. Despite the challenges faced, it was important not to forget the progress made in establishing and maintaining the non-proliferation regime. Since the Non-Proliferation Treaty had opened for signature, only a handful of additional States had acquired nuclear weapons, a number of countries had renounced efforts to acquire such weapons, nuclear war had become significantly less likely and geopolitical stability had largely been maintained. Nuclear safeguards had been preserved and were now being strengthened through adherence to additional protocols to IAEA safeguards agreements. Nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States alike had benefited from the implementation of articles I and II of the Treaty, which protected the security of all States parties by providing assurances against the development and acquisition by their neighbours and rivals of nuclear weapons, and by helping to forestall the addition of a destabilizing nuclear dimension to conflict-prone regions of the world.

87. Furthermore, under the New START Treaty, the strategic nuclear arsenals of the United States and the Russian Federation had been limited to levels not seen since the 1950s, and the United States stockpile was only some 12 per cent the size of its Cold War peak.

88. The non-proliferation regime had also proven effective as a foundation for a successful system whereby the benefits of nuclear science, which contributed to the health, nourishment, comfort and prosperity of all humankind, could be broadly shared. IAEA had been a focal point for that sharing, providing billions of dollars' worth of assistance to its member States in the use of nuclear energy and applications of nuclear science and technology for development. The United States had been the largest contributor to those efforts to promote peaceful nuclear activities, having provided not only significant financial contributions but also in-kind assistance to IAEA and its member States. For several decades, the United States had also been the largest supplier of nuclear power globally.

89. While the global non-proliferation regime had not prevented all proliferation, it had confounded experts' dire predictions of escalating proliferation, provided critical security benefits to all States parties and built a foundation for a global system of peaceful nuclear cooperation and development. If all States bore that in mind, they could surely find ways to work together to overcome current challenges and preserve those benefits in the future.

90. **Mr. Jato** (Sweden), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), said that the preparatory process for the 2020 Review Conference was taking place in a particularly challenging international security landscape: the international community was witnessing the use of weapons of mass destruction; nuclear weapons were gaining more prominence in security doctrines; the entry into force of the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty remained elusive; there was uncertainty regarding the future of the joint comprehensive plan of action; the prospects for progress on nuclear arms control were discouraging; and developments with respect to the nuclear and missile programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea were alarming, despite recent events offering a glimmer of hope.

91. In that environment, States were responsible for working together to find common ground. The Nordic countries had learned that sustainable security could be achieved only through cooperation; accordingly, they cooperated closely on disarmament and non-proliferation affairs, notwithstanding their different security policy choices.

92. The lack of gender equality had hampered disarmament and non-proliferation efforts for too long. The pursuit of equal gender representation was not only a question of rights and fairness, but was also a matter of efficiency. Studies showed that diverse teams were

more effective and innovative and took more sustainable decisions. The inclusion and strengthening of gender perspectives could help to break the ongoing stalemate with respect to disarmament and non-proliferation.

93. The Nordic countries were united in their concern regarding the continued risk to humanity of the threat of the use of nuclear weapons. During the current review cycle, it was important to reaffirm the nuclear disarmament obligations of States parties pursuant to article VI of the Treaty and to promote risk reduction and transparency measures. He encouraged collective action to reduce the operational status of nuclear weapons and the risk of their accidental use. Non-nuclear-weapon States that were parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty had a legitimate interest in receiving legally binding negative security assurances from nuclear-weapon States. The Nordic countries were ready to engage in any effort to achieve that goal.

94. When nuclear weapons were being modernized and new delivery systems developed, the importance of a rules-based system became vital. The fact that the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty was under severe pressure was deeply concerning. He called on the United States and the Russian Federation to continue their efforts to address the serious concerns regarding the compliance of the Russian Federation with that treaty, to extend the New START Treaty and to seek further reductions in strategic and non-strategic, deployed and non-deployed warheads.

95. Effective monitoring, verification and compliance mechanisms were critical building blocks for achieving nuclear disarmament. The Nordic countries welcomed and were actively involved in various initiatives in that regard, including the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification, which brought together nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States to develop the necessary capabilities for verifiably dismantling nuclear weapons, and the Quad Nuclear Verification Partnership, which deepened understanding of verification, not least in respect of how to manage the issue of information on proliferation. Progress on nuclear disarmament verification would be an important deliverable at the 2020 Review Conference.

96. The negotiation and conclusion of a fissile material cut-off treaty were a pressing need. Such a treaty could also provide for a phased approach to the elimination of existing stocks. In that regard, the Nordic countries fully supported the high-level fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group.

97. The Nordic countries also attached great importance to the establishment of zones free of nuclear weapons, and noted with regret the failure to convene a conference on the establishment of such a zone in the Middle East. Such zones provided an avenue for legally binding negative security assurances.

98. The Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty had established a global standard to which all but one State adhered. The Nordic countries urged all States that had not yet done so to sign and ratify that treaty without further delay, and to refrain from any action that might undermine it.

99. The Nordic countries firmly condemned the nuclear and ballistic missile tests carried out by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which constituted a flagrant violation of multiple Security Council resolutions and represented a serious challenge to the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. That country must return to compliance with its Treaty obligations.

100. The Nordic countries fully supported the joint comprehensive plan of action, which demonstrated that consensus was possible even when the starting point for discussions was difficult, and encouraged all parties to comply with their commitments and obligations. They greatly valued the role of IAEA in monitoring and verifying the implementation of the plan of action, and had provided financial support for those activities. Sustained implementation of the plan was necessary to maintain and strengthen the global non-proliferation regime.

101. He underscored the importance of additional protocols to IAEA safeguards agreements in ensuring effective verification and thus the credibility of the non-proliferation regime and security for all.

102. Safety, security and safeguards were of crucial importance in enabling peaceful uses of nuclear energy and technologies, which went far beyond the generation of nuclear power to encompass numerous applications that could bring benefits to millions of people, and the Non-Proliferation Treaty played a central role in that respect.

103. The Nordic countries were actively contributing to several international initiatives to prevent nuclear terrorism, one of the most prominent of which was the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, and was committed to continued efforts to enhance nuclear security.

104. The Non-Proliferation Treaty was a fundamental global pact that had served the international community well. Review conferences with no agreed outcome could not be allowed to become the norm given the challenges currently faced. It was essential to focus on common ground and shared objectives, to redouble efforts to

maintain and strengthen the relevance of the Treaty and to refrain from any action that might undermine it.

105. **Archbishop Jurkovič** (Observer for the Holy See) said that in the context of increasing international tensions and instability, international relations could not be held hostage to military force, mutual intimidation or the parading of arms stockpiles. As the 2020 Review Conference approached, the Holy See appealed to the shared wisdom and goodwill of humanity to reaffirm disarmament and non-proliferation as essential aspects of the international community's agenda. Weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, created a false sense of security. The tragic illusion of "peace" based on fear was superficial at best. People aspired to true peace, which was the opposite of fear. That desire could never be satisfied by military means alone, much less the possession of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

106. Non-proliferation and disarmament were not only ethical responsibilities but also mutually reinforcing and complementary moral and legal obligations towards every member of the human family. The continued existence of nuclear weapons contributed to a mentality of fear, violence and dominance. It was unfortunate that while other weapons of mass destruction were universally condemned, there was complacency over the continued possession and large-scale modernization of nuclear weapons.

107. In a united family of increasingly interdependent nations, national and international security interests were interconnected. Short-sighted approaches to national security and double standards had undermined unity and progress, undermining the original purpose spirit of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

108. Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation were linked to integral human development. Poverty reduction strategies could not be pursued separately from disarmament and peace efforts. The arms race, and the modernization and development of nuclear arsenals, infrastructure and delivery systems, robbed the poor and disadvantaged of the resources needed to reduce poverty and foster human development. In November 2017, the Holy See had convened an international symposium on a world free of nuclear weapons, to explore and strengthen connections between integral disarmament and integral human development. At that symposium, Pope Francis had expressed concern over the catastrophic humanitarian and environmental consequences of the use of nuclear weapons, as well as the risk of accidental detonation, condemning both the threat of use and the possession of such weapons.

109. The Holy See had ratified the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which demonstrated the strength of humanity's desire for true peace. It was important to remember that the same moral imperatives and objectives underpinned both that treaty and the Non-Proliferation Treaty. In that regard, the two treaties mutually reinforced and complemented one another.

110. The illusion of safety in nuclear strength was contradicted by the dangerous and haunting realities of nuclear threats and proliferation. In order to achieve the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons through irreversible, verifiable and universal nuclear disarmament, it was vital to dispel fear and animosity.

111. **Mr. Wannamethee** (Thailand) said that, as the 2020 Review Conference and the fiftieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Non-Proliferation Treaty approached, it was important to take stock of what had been achieved and consider how to ensure continued success. States parties to the Treaty shared equal responsibility in the implementation of the Treaty and its three pillars, which should be addressed in a balanced manner.

112. The use of nuclear technology must be accompanied by assurances of its use for exclusively peaceful purposes, as stipulated in article IV of the Treaty. Thailand therefore welcomed strengthened safeguards, as well as increased transparency and confidence-building measures by nuclear-weapon States, to ensure progress in the nuclear weapon reduction and disarmament process pursuant to article III of the Treaty.

113. The adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which was designed to complement the Non-Proliferation Treaty, reflected States parties' determination to fulfil article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in good faith. Thailand urged other States to engage in dialogue and decisions regarding its entry into force in a constructive manner.

114. As the depositary State of the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone, Thailand supported the establishment of more such zones worldwide. It therefore urged all parties concerned to support early discussions on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, as stipulated in article VII and mandated by the 2010 Review Conference. Positive progress on that issue would be a significant achievement for the 2020 Review Conference.

115. The lack of progress in implementing the outcomes of previous review conferences and the failure of the 2015 Review Conference to produce an outcome

document highlighted the need for redoubled efforts to ensure a meaningful and credible 2020 Review Conference. Furthermore, as stakeholders in the process, actors from civil society, industry and academia must be allowed to play an active role in the pursuit of the disarmament agenda.

116. Thailand placed great value on its close relationship with IAEA and its engagement with other international agencies, and supported such cooperation efforts, which could further strengthen the Non-Proliferation Treaty and more effectively advance the goal of international peace and security.

117. The ever-changing security landscape was of concern to all. While he welcomed the renewed willingness of relevant stakeholders to enter into dialogue regarding the Korean Peninsula, nuclear weapons continued to pose a threat to the region. The Treaty must be relevant, forceful and dynamic in order to address that and similar threats.

118. There were clear connections between disarmament, peace and security, and development. The establishment of peace and security through disarmament and non-proliferation were requisites for the achievement of those of the Sustainable Development Goals to which the Treaty could contribute. Furthermore, the fact that peaceful applications of nuclear technology could, inter alia, improve food security, public health and water management and provide energy should inspire States to work harder to ensure the success of the Treaty. Accordingly, he hoped for substantive and fruitful deliberations at the current session and the constructive participation of all States parties.

119. **Mr. Muylle** (Belgium) said that in the face of a grave and increasingly complex security situation, tensions between certain nuclear-weapon States and limited progress on non-proliferation issues, it was difficult to believe that the current review process would lead to a meaningful outcome. Since the unsuccessful 2015 Review Conference, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had conducted three nuclear tests and launched numerous missiles. The nuclear deal with Iran was at risk of unravelling, and the previous year's negotiations on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons had highlighted the increased polarization of the non-proliferation community.

120. While progress was still possible despite those challenges, it could not be achieved unless States parties were willing to engage meaningfully in the review process, overcome divisions and take concrete action. In that regard, the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference was still a firm basis for progress in respect of all three pillars of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Steps must be taken to reduce nuclear risks and prevent the unauthorized use of nuclear technologies, and nuclear weapons should be taken off high alert wherever possible.

121. Sustained political will was needed to establish international norms, which must be underpinned by legal instruments. The one country that continued to violate the international ban on nuclear tests was one exception too many. Moreover, voluntary moratoriums on nuclear testing did not ensure a permanent and fully verifiable legal norm; the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty must enter into force. All States should undertake the necessary political and legal steps to make adherence possible, because only full and unconditional adherence to the Treaty by all States would result in a world free of nuclear tests. However, the establishment of international norms was not in itself sufficient; those norms must be verified and non-compliance must be sanctioned. The Chemical Weapons Convention served as a grim reminder that even an almost universally accepted norm could be eroded when States parties refused to comply with their obligations thereunder.

122. Although most European States were not parties to the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, they all benefited from the protection it offered. Continued compliance with the Treaty was therefore of critical importance. The Russian Federation should continue to engage in dialogue with the United States to address the concerns raised by its development of a new missile system. He hoped that the protection that Europe enjoyed against the threat of intermediate-range missiles could one day be extended to other continents.

123. The benefits of the peaceful use of nuclear technologies were manifold, ranging from energy production to pest control, food sterilization and cancer therapy. As a market leader in the production of medical radioisotopes, Belgium would continue to take any necessary measures to ensure their uninterrupted delivery to the millions of patients who relied on them for diagnosis and treatment.

124. The full range of peaceful nuclear applications should remain accessible to all States. However, those benefits should also entail responsibilities. IAEA should be able to use all measures at its disposal to control States' nuclear programmes and detect any possible diversion of nuclear materials to weapons programmes. That required comprehensive safeguards agreements coupled with additional protocols. The possibility that the application of such standards might represent a burden on States could not be cited as a justification for rejection of such comprehensive guarantees of the peaceful nature of their nuclear programmes.

125. **Ms. Higgie** (New Zealand), speaking on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition, said that the current year marked the twentieth anniversary of the Coalition, which had been established to respond to the continued threat posed by nuclear weapons and the urgent need to fulfil the obligation enshrined in article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The risk of nuclear weapon detonation continued to grow, posing a threat to all peoples. As highlighted by the Secretary-General, global concerns about nuclear weapons were at their most acute since the Cold War. Now, more than ever, was the time for States parties to demonstrate their commitment to the Treaty by implementing it.

126. The nuclear disarmament obligations and commitments of States parties, as established in article VI of the Treaty and subsequently elaborated in the Treaty's review conference outcomes, were clear. The consensus agreements reached at previous review conferences, particularly the package of decisions and resolutions of 1995, the thirteen steps and the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference, were binding commitments and represented common ground on which all States parties had agreed.

127. Throughout each review cycle and in the annual General Assembly resolution on the matter, the New Agenda Coalition had consistently called for the accelerated implementation of States parties' nuclear disarmament obligations and commitments. Those included the de-alerting of nuclear weapons, the entry into force of the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, a fissile material cut-off treaty, transparency measures, nuclear disarmament verification, the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones, particularly in the Middle East, and the entry into force of the legally binding protocols to existing treaties establishing such zones, as well as the review of any related reservations. No meaningful progress had been made with respect to any of those obligations or commitments, despite the fact that many of them had been reaffirmed on a number of occasions. It was not the time to reinterpret them, to abandon or delay their implementation or to make their fulfilment conditional on the false notion of an improved global security environment. Doubts as to the intention of nuclear-weapon States to fulfil their disarmament obligations would weaken the Treaty, undermine the credibility of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and even make other States parties unwilling to fulfil their own obligations under the Treaty unless certain conditions were fulfilled.

128. States' existing obligations and commitments were mutually reinforcing and did not represent the priorities and views of just one group of States. Rather, they reflected the common agreement of all States parties on measures to advance the implementation of article VI.

129. To highlight common ground between States parties was not to ignore the tensions evident among them. Differing views on a number of key issues had been apparent for many years, including on the pace of disarmament and the emphasis to be given to the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapon detonation. States parties also differed in their views regarding the recently adopted Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. While some, including the members of the New Agenda Coalition, believed that that Treaty supported the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, complementing and strengthening the obligations set out in the Non-Proliferation Treaty and contributing to the implementation of article VI, others disagreed. That disagreement did not need to be resolved at the current session. Rather, it was important to focus on the fulfilment by States parties of their obligations and commitments under the Non-Proliferation Treaty, including those agreed at previous review conferences.

130. Speaking as the representative of New Zealand, she said that for almost five decades, the Non-Proliferation Treaty had been the cornerstone of her country's international obligations relating to nuclear weapons. Over that period, New Zealand had also assumed obligations pursuant to the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty and the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and had undertaken additional commitments as member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group.

131. The confidence and sense of security provided by internationally agreed rules was particularly valuable in times of heightened tension, during which international law gave vital reassurance that there were constraints on the conduct of and use of force by States. In that regard, the international community was fortunate to have in place rules and undertakings regarding nuclear weapons.

132. In 2017, New Zealand had lent its support to the establishment of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in order to supplement the efforts of States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty to make nuclear disarmament under article VI of Treaty a reality. The new obligations established by the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in no way displaced the obligations assumed under the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which New Zealand expected all States parties to abide by fully.

133. Recent instances of non-compliance with international humanitarian law were considerable cause for concern. Such instances included the use of chemical weapons, not only in war zones in the Syrian Arab

Republic but also in Malaysia and the United Kingdom. New Zealand strongly condemned any use of chemical weapons, and those responsible must be held to account. Another major challenge in recent years was the violation by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of the ban on nuclear tests. However, she was pleased to note promising developments in that respect, including the upcoming inter-Korean summit and the subsequent summit to be held between the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

134. Further efforts could be made to enhance compliance with and non-proliferation aspects of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in the context of the preparatory process for the 2020 Review Conference, including through the strengthening and universal implementation of comprehensive safeguards and safety and security mechanisms, and support for the key role played by export control regimes.

135. Considerable work was required to implement article VI of the Treaty and related commitments made by nuclear-weapon States at previous review conferences. Document NPT/CONF.2020/PC.II/WP.13, submitted by the New Agenda Coalition, set out all of those commitments, many of which remained unfulfilled. The document reflected the Coalition's expectation that States' nuclear disarmament obligations under the Treaty would be fulfilled with the same rigour that the international community rightly insisted on in relation to all other rules and undertakings in the area of international humanitarian law.

136. **Mr. Saleh** (Iraq) said that his country attached great importance to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the issues of non-proliferation and disarmament, as the possession and development of nuclear weapons posed a grave threat to regional and international peace and security. Iraq complied with all relevant treaties and conventions, and had taken a number of legislative and procedural measures that had enabled it to fulfil its commitments in that area.

137. The credibility of the Treaty was based on the balanced implementation of its three pillars. Promotion of the universality of all international instruments on non-proliferation and disarmament was vital to provide the international community with assurances regarding the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, and to provide future generations with a safer future. Therefore, Iraq had voted in favour of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

138. The failure to adopt an outcome document at the 2015 Review Conference was a grave one that undermined the credibility of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The demonstration of greater flexibility and political will was vital for the success of the 2020 Review Conference, and would pave the way for a positive and constructive result that took all Member States' concerns into consideration.

139. He reaffirmed the importance of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, which would contribute to nuclear disarmament efforts and enhance regional and international peace and security. In order for such a zone to be created, it was essential for Israel to achieve nuclear disarmament, adhere to the Treaty and place its nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards.

140. It was important to establish a legally binding instrument that would provide non-nuclear-weapon States with assurances that nuclear-weapon States would not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons. Negative security assurances were a legitimate request by non-nuclear-weapon States, which had voluntarily renounced nuclear weapons as a military option.

141. The peaceful use of nuclear energy was an inalienable right of States parties pursuant to article IV of the Treaty, and in order to achieve sustainable development that right must not be restricted. However, nuclear terrorism was a serious threat to international security. Iraq therefore called on the international community to strengthen security measures and work with IAEA in order to help countries wishing to develop peaceful uses of nuclear energy to do so safely and prevent nuclear material from falling into the hands of terrorists and other illegal groups. The elimination of nuclear weapons would eliminate the threat of nuclear terrorism.

142. Iraq supported the entry into force of the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and called on all countries that had not yet ratified it to do so without delay. Through its joint chairmanship with Belgium of the Tenth Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, Iraq was working to hasten the entry of that Treaty into force.

143. In conclusion, the current session was key to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. He hoped that tangible progress in those areas would be achieved through practical and effective steps to address the challenges and failures that resulted from non-compliance with the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

144. **Mr. Pedroso Cuesta** (Cuba) said that, 72 years after the United Nations had been founded with the aim of saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war, the existence of nuclear weapons continued to pose a threat to the survival of humanity. The only guarantee

against the use of nuclear weapons was their prohibition and total elimination.

145. The international community's overwhelming support for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which represented a real contribution to international peace and security, was a milestone in the history of the United Nations towards achieving general and complete nuclear disarmament. Cuba, which continued to prioritize nuclear disarmament, had been the fifth country to ratify the Treaty. He urged all States to follow suit to enable its prompt entry into force. The Treaty expressly prohibited the threat of the use of nuclear weapons, thereby outlawing security doctrines based on so-called nuclear deterrence.

146. The countries of Latin America and the Caribbean had made a significant contribution to nuclear disarmament and international peace and security through the creation of the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in a densely populated area under the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, and through the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace, adopted at the second Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, held in Havana in January 2014.

147. Cuba was concerned by the revision of national policies on nuclear weapons, which could increase the likelihood of nuclear war. The modernization of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems weakened the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the unequivocal commitments undertaken by States parties under article VI of the Treaty.

148. Political manipulation based on double standards and political interests in relation to non-proliferation must cease. It was neither fair nor acceptable for only certain States parties to comply fully with the Non-Proliferation Treaty. No country or group of countries should have a monopoly over nuclear weapons or their quantitative or qualitative development. The only way to overcome the fundamental flaws of the Treaty and its selective and discriminatory implementation was the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

149. The 2020 Review Conference must not end in failure. It should mark a turning point while building on the progress already made towards a world free of nuclear weapons. The section of the final document of the upcoming Review Conference that would cover nuclear disarmament must meet the expectations of States parties and achieve balance with the other pillars of the Treaty.

150. Cuba regretted the failure of the international community to convene a conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. It hoped that the next Conference would make progress on that front and that the 1995 resolution would be implemented.

151. The current review process for the Non-Proliferation Treaty, particularly the preparatory process for the review conferences, was ineffective and inefficient. Despite its high cost, it did not achieve the goal of tangible progress on substantive matters relating to implementation of the Treaty. The Preparatory Committee should make significant progress and prepare substantive recommendations to be examined at the 2020 Review Conference.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.